

[SNAPSHOT]



The University of Texas at El Paso

On the eve of its Centennial Celebration in 2014, The University of Texas at El Paso has become one of the nation's top-ranked universities. In its 2013 annual college issue, *Washington Monthly* magazine ranked UTEP #7 overall—between #6 Stanford and #8 Harvard. Ranking criteria include an institution's research and doctoral program excellence, its dedication to civic engagement and service to a region, state and nation, and its success in fostering student social mobility, where, for the second year in a row, UTEP ranked #1 among all U.S. colleges and universities. The magazine recognized UTEP for its commitments to fostering affordability and access for residents of the surrounding region, and to ensuring excellence in teaching and research for the students it serves. UTEP's affordability was recently confirmed by the U.S. Department of Education which reported that UTEP has the lowest net price among all U.S. research universities, averaging \$2,543 per academic year. Nearly 80% of UTEP's 23,000 students are Hispanic, more than half are the first in their families to attend college, and nearly one-third report a family income of \$20,000 per year.

"Achieving both affordability and high quality in a low-resource setting such as

the U.S.-Mexico border region requires a deep commitment by all faculty and staff to ensure that students who entrust us with their aspirations are given every opportunity not only to pursue them, but to participate in enriched educational experiences on our campus that will prepare them to compete successfully with their peers from across the globe," said Diana Natalicio, UTEP's President for the past 25 years.

Offering 71 bachelor's, 76 master's and 20 doctoral degree programs, UTEP gives students access to high-quality research opportunities in state-of-the-art facilities. The university's research funding has risen to nearly \$80 million annually, including support from federal agencies, foundations and corporations, including the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health and NASA. Recent research projects have focused on cancer, Alzheimer's disease, affordable water desalination, a vaccine for Chagas disease, alternative energy and climate change in the Arctic. ■

SET FOR SUCCESS

"UTEP offers every student myriad opportunities for success and involvement,"

said Mayra Sandoval, a first-generation college student from Fort Hancock, Texas. A senior majoring in psychology, Mayra had the opportunity to participate in epidemiological research at the University of Costa Rica in San José, through the NIH-funded Minorities International Research Training Program. She plans to become a psychiatrist. "With this career, I hope to give back to the community of El Paso by addressing the high need for mental health care," she said.

Giving back to the community is central to the UTEP ethos and a responsibility that students, faculty and staff take seriously. Recent data reveal that more than 5,500 UTEP students donated more than 467,000 hours to community service, with a total estimated value of \$10.2 million.

Oscar Casanova, a finance major and accounting major, said he is "at the right place at the right time."

"We wake up with a passion," he said of his fellow students. "We tell ourselves that we're proud to be a UTEP Miner." He feels confident that, thanks to several internship opportunities and a strong alumni network, he'll make it in the banking industry.

UTEP's #1 ranking in social mobility and its commitment to extending the American dream of higher education across all demographic categories and zip codes, will enable UTEP to fulfill its vision to play a national leadership role in redefining the public research university.

